

98-032

Carolyn "Pani" Goldsby Kolb, N '63

COLLECTION: SCR

SIZE: 2 scr boxes, 1 fabric box

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION:

Donation of material by Carolyn Goldsby Kolb, Mignon Faget designer

RESTRICTIONS: None

PROCESSOR:

Abby Holt

ORGANIZATION AND ARRANGEMENT:

The two scrapbooks are placed together in one box, while the Campfire Girl Portrait is in its own box. The designer dress and Camp Fire Girl vest is placed in a fabric box.

FINDING AIDS:

Inventory with folder descriptions is available in repository.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The first scr box collection contains two scrapbooks with the first being memorabilia from when Carolyn was a girl in South Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf Coast. The second scrapbook contains Camp Fire Girl photos with newspaper clippings about the group. The second scr box contains a matted portrait of Carolyn Goldsby Kolb in her Camp Fire Girl uniform with crafts she had made. The fabric box contains a 1960's style green and yellow designer dress, and a Camp Fire Girl vest decorated with earned beads.

SEE FOLLOWING PAGE FOR MORE INFO. ON THIS COLLECTION.

Carolyn "Pani" Goldsby Kolb, Newcomb '63
6123 Loyola St.
New Orleans, LA 70118

1/7/99

Various memorabilia including photo, two scrapbooks, decorated vest, photo.

I was born in New Orleans in 1942, but when my father came back from the Army he and my mother and I moved to Bogalusa, Louisiana. In Bogalusa I attended Annunciation Catholic School (even though my family were Methodists) and then Bogalusa High School from ninth grade on.

Bogalusa had begun as a sawmill town -- investors from the North had bought pine-lands and began cutting timber circa 1910. The town was formed in the 1920s and while I was growing up the largest industry was a paper mill, owned by the Gaylord Corporation and later by Crown Zellerbach. Bogalusa was not a particularly Southern town in that there was a strong trade union base, few if any old families (there really weren't any 19th century buildings around either), and a number of northerners either at the mill or in peripheral industries. My father's family was an old family from the same area of Louisiana, the Florida Parishes, so we did have an extended family in nearby communities.

My father was the representative of the Internal Revenue Service for the surrounding parishes, and my mother was a registered nurse, who served as director of the nursing school at the Bogalusa Medical Center (community hospital, once the sawmill company hospital) and, when the school closed, she became head of central supply at the newly opened Washington-St. Tammany Charity Hospital.

The overwhelming culture of the town was of a Southern Baptist nature, with many of the mill workers and a majority of the population coming from the surrounding rural south (including Mississippi -- Bogalusa was on the state line.) The black population was probably at about 20 to 30 percent while I lived there and has grown percentage-wise with time. Bogalusa suffered badly in the Civil Rights era. There were about 25,000 people in Bogalusa in the 1950's, now, in the 1990's there are only about 13,000.

The Camp Fire Girls was begun in Maine some time after the turn of the century (probably in the early 1920's.) It was patterned on the Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts programs. It was supposedly introduced to Bogalusa by the wife of a newspaper editor in the 1940's. She had experience with the program elsewhere, outside Louisiana I believe. The program was not in all towns in Louisiana: for example, there were groups in Baton Rouge, and in Eunice, but not in New Orleans while I was active. In 1966 I served on the charter board of the Greater New Orleans Council of Camp Fire Girls -- which was formed because it was a very active organization in Seattle from whence large numbers of Boeing Corporation families moved to the Michoud Assembly Facility.

When I was a member the Camp Fire Girls program began with Blue Birds (age seven to ten.) There were weekly meetings, a uniform (navy blue

with a red vest) and songs and ceremonies. Camp Fire Girls, the central program, began for ten year olds (as with the entire program it was then for girls only, boys were added sometime in the 1980's.)

Camp Fire proceeded in ranks or steps: the first year was Trail Seeker, then Wood Gather, then Fire Maker and then Torch Bearer. Each rank had several steps that had to be completed. To complete the requirements for Trail Seekers you had to have an Indian name (the Camp Fire Handbook had a list of Indian syllable meanings that could be combined for naming purposes) and make a scrapbook (which is the scrap book included) learn songs, take part in Camp Fires (which in this case meant ceremonies) and earn various honor beads.

The Honor beads were of different colors for different categories. You could trade in ten small ones and get a large one. You could sew them on a vest, or there was a beige cotton ceremonial gown with leather fringe that could also be decorated (I never had a gown.) There were lists of separate tasks, each earning an honor bead, in the handbook. The tasks were under different classifications which determined the color of the bead-- red beads were for athletics and sports, yellow was for business, sky blue was for frontiers or science, brown was for outdoors and woodcrafts, orange was for homemaking, and there was a green one for handcrafts, I think a purple one, maybe for fine arts, etc.

The hand-made scrapbook was done for Trail Seekers, I believe, so it dates from 1952. The other scrapbook was for the next or the prior year. The photo shows me in my Camp Fire uniform surrounded by various crafts projects -- which I entered as a hobby in the Washington Parish Fair and won first prize in the children's category in the hobby show, probably in 1954.

The Camp Fire High School program was called the Horizon Club and did not have emphasis on costumes but more on group service projects. I stayed in the Camp Fire program from the second through the twelfth grade (since I skipped the fifth grade in School I only had three years of Horizon Club: I stayed with my original Blue Bird Group through Camp Fire.)

In the 1950's, when there was no feminist movement to speak of, organizations for girls, like Camp Fire, managed to find a way to nourish self-esteem in young women. Like other youth activities in the 1950's it was regimented, and conservative, and perhaps rather old fashioned even then. But it was also a great deal of fun! And, for acquisitive, driven, little academic strivers like myself it was a LOT of fun.

Two notes: the Bogalusa Community Concerts Series obviously had good artists: there is an autographed program in the scrapbook for a Jerome Hines concert (he sang in the Magic Flute in New Orleans in 1998, more than 40 years later.) Also, Camp Fire did have an active program in Bogalusa's black community, my mother was one of two people who began it, also in the 1950's.